



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**  
Jacksonville District

# NEWS RELEASE

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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

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## **Corps approves 2008 Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule**

Jacksonville, Fla. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced today its approval of a new Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule.

Commander of the Corps' South Atlantic Division, Brig. Gen. Joseph Schroedel signed the record of decision April 28, 2008, in Atlanta, Ga.

Currently, with the impacts of a two-year-long drought, Lake Okeechobee is at approximately 10.3 feet. The Corps' goal is to manage the lake between 12.5 and 15.5 feet throughout the year – a safe range for the Herbert Hoover Dike and to best balance and meet the needs for all the water resource purposes that Lake Okeechobee serves.

Because weather conditions in south Florida can swing quickly from one extreme to another, providing for public safety requires that the Corps have a plan in place now to help prevent future high lake levels from threatening the 143-mile long dike. Lake Okeechobee has a surface area of 730 square miles and its drainage basin covers more than 4,600 square miles: one-foot of rainfall in the Kissimmee Basin can equal a whopping four-foot rise in the lake.

Schroedel said the plan is the most feasible solution and represents the course of action that best serves the overall public interest. "Managing the lake at a lower level improves public health and safety performance by reducing structural risk to the Herbert Hoover Dike while rehabilitation efforts are underway, and will provide environmental benefits to the lake and downstream estuaries," he said.



Based solely on current water storage capacity in the system, the operational changes will allow for quicker response and operational flexibility to changing lake conditions and tributary inflows.

“The 2008 plan is based on the best engineering, science and water management analysis available and it is the best plan for balancing the entire greater Everglades region,” said Jacksonville District Commander Col. Paul Grosskruger.

The proposed changes improve the rates of flow to the coastal estuaries by allowing low rates of flow to begin earlier as the lake rises, which in turn helps reduce the need for higher flows later in the year. The changes also improve the environmental health of the lake by reducing the frequency and duration of high lake elevations that impact the lake's shore zones.

Once the plan is fully implemented, water managers will begin conducting another regulation schedule study that will take into account construction of early CERP projects, including projects expedited by the South Florida Water Management District. These components will provide many additional options for water storage and management. Water managers will also take into account an adjusted lake level afforded by the Herbert Hoover Dike Rehabilitation Project.

For more information about the Lake Okeechobee Regulation Schedule, visit the Jacksonville District website at [http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Divisions/Executive/Branches/CCO/lakeokeechobe\\_lorss.htm](http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Divisions/Executive/Branches/CCO/lakeokeechobe_lorss.htm).

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